Introduction to Digital Arts | Wesleyan Winter Session 2016
January 6 – 15
Weekdays 10AM-12:30PM 1:30-4:00PM

Instructor: Christopher Chenier cchenier@wesleyan.edu

Required Materials:

Portable Hard Drive - 1TB Minimum
Wacom Tablet, any will do.
Digital Foundations: Intro to Media Design with Creative Suite by Michael Mandiberg (also online)
Intro to Digital Arts Reader (To be supplied by instructor.)

About this Course:

This experience will introduce students to the digital arts, an area of creative practice encompassing computer-based art from GIFS and graphics to cutting edge digital fabrication tools. While developing the critical and methodological tools to engage problems in our digital culture, students will acquire the practical skills necessary to create and communicate digitally. Sessions will emphasize the ways software is used for project development, prototyping, and experimentation. Most of our time will be spent in Adobe Creative Cloud. The core elements of CC will be covered through workshops in image editing, graphics, layout, and type. Translating digital files into physical objects, students will work with a laser cutter, large format inkjet printers, and a CNC mill.

Requirements:

Students are expected to participate actively in class and to complete all nightly assignments. In addition to daily workshops and studio time, there will be readings, technical tutorials and research assignments. Students will present their work daily and are expected to participate in critiques and discussions. Attendance is mandatory; there are no make-up sessions. Please email the instructor in advance if you cannot make a class.

Students are evaluated on participation (30%), assignments (30%), and the final project (40%).

Books/Readings:

TBA - All readings will be made available through the course website and handed out in class.

Final Project:

Using the tools/skills introduced in this course, students will develop and realize a fully realized project connected with their own ongoing work in the University. In preparation for this, students will craft 1000-word project statements describing this project and providing a narrative of how course content, research, and other developmental influences were integrated into their process. Final projects will demonstrate a strong understanding of the range of contemporary digital arts practices and a command of the software and concepts covered in class.

Day 1 – Wed. 1/6

- Introductions
- Workshop: Developing Final Projects
- Workshop: Photoshop Day One
    - o Workspace, pallets, and tools
    - o Resolution
    - o Color Spaces
    - o File Structure
    - o File Types

- Afternoon Studio Time
- Assignment: Read and complete Chapters 9 and 10 in Digital Foundations

Day 2 – Thurs. 1/7

- Workshop: Photoshop Day 2

    - o Layers
    - o Masks
    - o Adjustments
    - o Pen tool and vectors
    - o Color and *Kuler*
    - o Liquefaction
    - o Selection tools

- Afternoon Studio Time
- Assignment: Read and complete Chapters 11 and 12 in Digital Foundations

Day 3 - Fri. 1/8

- Workshop: Illustrator

    - o Drawing / Geometry
    - o Fill and Stroke
    - o Pixels into Vectors

- o Type
- o Pathfinder
- o Objects

- Afternoon Studio Time
- Assignment: Read and complete Chapters 3 through 6 in Digital Foundations

Day 4 – Mon. 1/11

- Visit Artist: Andrew Ruff, Architecture, Yale University
- Workshop: Illustrator Day 2

  - o Drawing / Geometry
  - o Fill and Stroke
  - o Pixels into Vectors
  - o Type
  - o Pathfinder
  - o Objects

- Workshop: The laser cutter
- Afternoon Studio Time
- Assignment: Read and complete Chapters 13 and 14 in Digital Foundations

Day 5 – Tues. 1/12

- Artist Visit, Sara Hendren, Design Researcher and Artist, Olin College
- Workshop: InDesign

  - o Workspace
  - o Design tools
  - o Multi-page layouts
  - o Pre-Press

- Afternoon Studio Time
- Assignment:

  - o Create a multi-page PDF portfolio of your work using a cohesive design strategy – key is your organization, ordering of work, and page numbers.
  - o Create visually stimulating business cards and resume with resolved and clearly expressed visual style.

Day 6 – Wed. 1/13

- Artist Visit - Sarah Pike, Printmaking and Painting, Bennington College

- Workshop: co-led by Sarah Pike – digital and traditional studios combine
- Studio Time

Day 7 – Thurs. 1/14

- Artist Visit: Virginia Lee Montgomery, Performance and Sculpture, Yale University
- Afternoon Studio Time
- Assignment:
  - Complete finals and prepare to present them. Presentations must conform to 20-minute critique limit. Prepare all files to be handed-in using the appropriate file structure.
  - Write a project statement and process narrative. Each section should be at least 500 words. Describe how you developed your final and what concepts, tools and other strategies you deployed. Discuss the future of this project if if the final represents the early stages of larger project, set of questions, or process.

Day 8 – Fri. 1/15

- Final Critique with visiting panel (Andrew Ruff, Virginia Lee Montgomery, and TBA). Presentations and critiques will be no longer than 20 minutes per student.
- Place all documents in correct folder on your thumb drive using appropriate file structure and formats prior to class.